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O 081702Z JUL 09
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1140
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHDH/AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE 0132
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH IMMEDIATE 0219

UNCLAS RIYADH 000902

SIPDIS

PASS TO NEA/ARP JHARRIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SAUDI TERROR TRIAL CONVICTIONS

¶1. The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) released a statement from the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution regarding the verdicts in the terrorism trials for accused Al-Qaida militants. The SPA statement follows below:

June 8, 2009: Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sa'daan, official spokesperson for the Saudi Ministry of Justice, confirmed special security courts in Saudi Arabia convicted 330 individuals on charges including conspiring with Al-Qaeda, plotting to disrupt national security and financing terrorism. The sentences handed down ranged from travel bans and financial penalties to prison time and the death sentence. Those sentenced to travel bans will be allowed to choose which city they will reside in for the period of the travel ban. Those found guilty can appeal their sentences and can either defend themselves or hire a lawyer. In closing, Al-Sa'daan also announced arrangements were underway to allow the press to cover the trials. End SPA statement.

¶2. Embassy analysis and additional details will follow septel.

ERDMAN